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NODIS

CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON MBFR

REF: SECTO 04123

1. THE ARTICLE IS REplete WITH DISTORTION AND FACTUAL INACCURACIES. IT IS DIFFICULT TO FIGURE OUT WHO GOT TO RECORD, THE AUTHOR, SINCE WHAT HE SAYS REFLECTS NO KNOWN AGENCY VIEWS. EVEN SO, IN THIS TOWN NOWADAYS ONE CANNOT RULE OUT THAT SOMEONE CHOSE TO IDENTIFY YOU WITH THIS CARICATURE OF OUR MBFR POSITION. IT IS AT LEAST WORTH NOTING THAT THE CDU'S SHADOW DEFENSE MINISTER RECENTLY BLOSSOMED FORTH WITH A VERY CRITICAL COMMENT ON OPTION THREE AND THIS IN TURN IS TO SOME DEGREE A REFLECTION OF WELL-KNOWN FRENCH CRITICISMS OF THE WHOLE MBFR EFFORT AS REPRESENTING UNILATERAL CONCESSIONS, UNVERIFIABLE PROPOSALS, ETC. ALTHOUGH THIS ARTICLE IS PERVADED WITH INACCURACIES, IT DOES PERHAPS FORESHADOW SOME OF THE

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DEBATE WE MAY YET GET WHEN THE NEW SOVIET PROPOSALS LEAK.

I PERSONALLY DOUBT THAT ANY PROGRESS ON MBFR CAN BE EXPECTED THIS YEAR, MUCH LESS AN AGREEMENT. I HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT WHEN THE DUST HAS SETTLED AFTER OPTION THREE WAS TABLED WE MIGHT PROCEED TO A SIMPLE PERSONNEL CUT THIS YEAR, WITH THE SOVIET CUT SUFFICIENTLY LARGER THAN OURS THAT THE COMMON CEILING GOAL WOULD BE SAFEGUARDED. I NOW FIND IT DIFFICULT TO ENVISAGE THIS. IN ITSELF THIS IS NOT A TRAGEDY, BUT THE DANGER IS THAT WHEN IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BECOME HOPELESSLY COMPLEX, THE PRESSURES FOR UNILATERAL CUTS WILL AGAIN BECOME GREAT. MEANWHILE, I AM AFRAID THE POST ALLEGATIONS THAT YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR A DISADVANTAGEOUS PROPOSAL WILL BE USED BY THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN EAGER TO SPREAD THIS TYPE OF ALLEGATION MORE GENERALLY. THE ARTICLE NATURALLY MAKES NO MENTION OF THE FACT THAT OPTION THREE IS INFINITELY LESS ONEROUS THAN THE UNILATERAL NUCLEAR CUTS THAT HAVE BEEN PROPOSED UNDER THE GUISE OF MODERNIZATION IN BOTH THE CONGRESS AND CERTAIN QUARTERS IN THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT.

2. THE FACTS USED BY RECORD IN HIS ARTICLE ARE DISTORTED, HIS ANALYSIS IS FAULTY AND HIS CONCLUSION ABSURD. FURTHERMORE, HE WRONGLY ATTRIBUTES OPTION THREE TO YOU PERSONALLY AND IMPLIES THAT YOU REJECTED THE IDEA OF SEEKING SOVIET FORCE REDUCTIONS PROPORTIONATELY GREATER THAN OUR OWN, WHICH IS, OF COURSE, PRECISELY WHAT WE ARE ASKING WHEN ALL PACT AND NATO FORCES ARE TAKEN AS A BASE. FINALLY, HE ALLEGES THAT YOU ARE ALSO AGAINST THE COMPLETE DISBANDMENT OF SOVIET UNITS -- AN IDEA LONG REJECTED BY ALL WASHINGTON AGENCIES AS DANGEROUS, AS IT WOULD OPEN THE DOOR TO SIMILAR PACT DEMANDS DIRECTED AGAINST OUR OWN FORCES. THE FALLACY OF RECORD'S ARGUMENTS WAS POINTED OUT TO HIM, I AM TOLD, AT A BROOKINGS SEMINAR OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY GROUP LAST THURSDAY EVENING WHICH HYLAND, NEWHOUSE AND LODAL ATTENDED. INCIDENTALLY, RECORD IS NO LONGER WORKING AT BROOKINGS BUT IS A LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT FOR SAM NUNN. I REGRET TO SAY, HE IS A STUDENT OF MINE.

3. THE CRUX OF RECORD'S ARGUMENT IS THAT OUR PRESENT
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POSITION ON MBFR CALLS FOR US AND SOVIET REDUCTIONS WHICH WOULD CREATE A MORE UNFAVORABLE FORCE RATIO FOR US THAN THE EXISTING ONE. THIS CONCLUSION IS BASED ON INACCURATE FACTS. HE CLAIMS A US CUT OF 29,000 WOULD REPRESENT 15 OF OUR FORCES IN WEST GERMANY. THIS IS ACCURATE ONLY FOR US GROUND FORCES (WHICH ARE ACTUALLY 193,000 RATHER THAN THE 195,000 HE CITES). HOWEVER, WHEN HE CALCULATES SOVIET CUTS HE USES AS A BASE GROUND FORCES PLUS AIR MANPOWER TO

ARRIVE AT A 12 FIGURE. OUR POSITION CALLS FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF 68,000 SOVIET GROUND FORCES (NOT THE 65,000 HE CITES), AND WHEN TAKEN AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL SOVIET GROUND FORCES IN THE GUIDELINES AREA IS 15. IF THIS IS FIGURED AS A PERCENTAGE OF SOVIET GROUND PLUS AIR MANPOWER (544,000 RATHER THAN THE 525,000 HE CITES), IT COMES OUT TO 13, WHICH IS THE SAME AS THE US PROJECTED CUT WHEN AIR MANPOWER IS INCLUDED IN THE BASE.

4. WHERE RECORD REALLY GOES WRONG, HOWEVER, IS TO NEGLECT ENTIRELY OUR INSISTENCE ON THE "COMMON CEILING" AT THE END OF PHASE II. THIS IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR CURRENT POSITION. IN PHASE I, THE 68,000 MAN SOVIET CUT WOULD BE 6 OF TOTAL PACT FORCES IN THE AREA, WHILE OUR 29,000 MAN REDUCTION WOULD REPRESENT ONLY 3 OF TOTAL NATO TROOP STRENGTH. THUS HIS ARGUMENT THAT WE SHOULD ASK THE SOVIETS FOR A GREATER PROPORTIONAL CUT IS IN FACT OUR POSITION AND HIS CONCLUSION THAT THE RATIO OF US AND SOVIET FORCES WOULD BE MORE UNFAVORABLE AFTER REDUCTIONS THAN IT IS NOW IS LOGICALLY AND FACTUALLY WRONG.

5. RECORD IS ALSO OFF THE MARK ON HIS ESTIMATE OF THE PACT BUILDUP OVER THE PAST EIGHT YEARS. THE 38,000 FIGURE FOR MEN IS CURRENTLY A SUBJECT OF DISPUTE WITHIN THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, AS THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT SOME PACT UNITS HAVE BEEN THINNED OUT, BUT THE 3,600 FIGURE FOR TANKS IS GROSSLY EXAGGERATED BY ANY ESTIMATE. CIA'S CURRENT JUDGMENT IS THAT PACT TANKS HAVE INCREASED BY 100-200 AT MOST.

6. FINALLY, THE POINT ON GEOGRAPHIC ASYMMETRIES IS ALSO CAST IN A MISLEADING WAY. IT TAKES NO ACCOUNT OF OUR DEMAND THAT SOVIET EQUIPMENT BE WITHDRAWN WITH THEIR CONFIDENTIAL

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FORCES WHILE OURS WOULD REMAIN IN PLACE. IT ALSO PLAYS DOWN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF AN ENTIRE SOVIET TANK ARMY. OUR NUCLEAR-CAPABLE AIRCRAFT COULD BE RETURNED IN A NUMBER OF HOURS, AND WITH REFORGER, WE COULD RETURN A SIZEABLE NUMBER OF OUR TROOPS MORE QUICKLY THAN THE 30-45 DAYS CITED BY RECORD.

7. THE MOST MISCHIEVOUS PART OF THE ARTICLE IS THE IMPLICATION THAT WE SHOULD CALL FOR THE DISBANDMENT OF SOVIET UNITS. THE NEW SOVIET PROPOSAL HAS CALLED FOR PRECISELY THIS ON BOTH SIDES AND IT IS SOMETHING OUR MILITARY AND THE ALLIES HAVE LONG RESISTED. IT WILL BE UNHELPFUL TO HAVE THIS PART OF THE ARTICLE PLAYED BACK TO US BY THE SOVIETS IN VIENNA.

8. IN SUM, RECORD'S PIECE DOES NOT REFLECT THE VIEWS OF ANY AGENCY OR RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL WHO UNDERSTANDS OUR MBFR POSITION. IT CONTAINS NO INFORMATION THAT IT NOT PUBLICLY AVAILABLE, IS REplete WITH INACCURACIES, AND MAKES NO MENTION OF RECENT EVENTS, SUCH AS THE TABLING OF THE NEW SOVIET PROPOSAL. EVEN OPTION THREE IS SUMMARIZED INCOMPLETELY WITH NO NUMBER GIVEN FOR NUCLEAR-CAPABLE AIRCRAFT AND NO MENTION OF THE PERSHINGS. FROM WHAT I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OBSERVE, I WOULD HAVE TO SAY THAT RECORD'S EFFORT IS A MISGUIDED EFFORT AT PERSONAL GRANDSTANDING. BUT IT MAY START YET ANOTHER MYTH. INGERSOLL

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